

Linda Browning Weis
Chairman
Kansas Arts Commission



Sam Brownback
Governor
State of Kansas

June 3, 2011

Kansas Arts Commission
Jayhawk Towers, 700 SW Jackson, Suite 1004
Topeka, Kansas 66603

Dear Commissioners:

It is an honor and privilege to be asked by Kansas Governor Sam Brownback to serve as Chairman of the Kansas Arts Commission. I have accepted this appointment because of my heartfelt commitment to the Arts and Artists of Kansas, where I have lived, worked, and supported the Arts for more than 50 years.

I am a product of the University of Kansas, where I majored in performing arts and music education, graduating with a bachelor's degree. My master's degree in music is from the University of Denver, and my Ph.D. coursework in choral conducting was at the Eastman School of Music, Rochester, New York. I have taught music at all levels—from college through pre-school in both public and private schools, where my strength was in developing innovative curriculum and special programs to meet unfilled need. I founded and maintained a private music school for 13 years that was chosen for State and National honors by the professional associations of music educators, as was the public school music curriculum that I created to make the best use of the talents and funding for public school students.

A life choice was necessary as I continued my doctoral program in choral conducting. In order to continue in that field, the unavailability of jobs in college-level choral conducting dictated that I would have to leave my family and commute long distances for a position. That was not a choice I was willing to make; thus, I changed careers at age 50 from highly-trained music professional to a commission-based novice in real estate sales. Though the first few months were a challenge, I was soon blessed with exponential success. Two years later I purchased a real estate franchise and opened my own brokerage, which has been in operation since 1992. I work alongside my husband, who retired in 1999 from Kansas State University, where he had served as the longtime Assistant/Associate/Interim Director of the Division of Biology. A strong work ethic, high levels of integrity, and personalized professional service are goals to which we have been committed since the inception of our company. We never take for granted the many friendships and blessings we have enjoyed as a result of our business.

My community leadership roles in Manhattan have included Board Chairman of the Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce, as well as the Chamber's Foundation Board and Executive Committee. In 2005 I was elected to Leadership Kansas, where I am a life member and have served on the Selection Committee. In 2008 I was appointed by Governor Sebelius to the Governor's Military Council, where I was reappointed by Governors Mark Parkinson and Brownback. I have visited Washington, D.C., countless times in support of Kansas military bases and families during the BRAC process, and I was the lead community proponent for the site-selection of Kansas for the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility, working cooperatively with the Kansas BioScience Authority and KansasBIO.

I have been a patron of the Symphony in the Flint Hills since its inception. I serve on the Governing Board of the Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art, the Advisory Board to the Kansas State University Department of Music, and as President of the Kansas Arts Foundation, Inc. I have maintained corporate sponsorship for the Friends of numerous Arts organizations, including KSU's McCain Auditorium. I maintain membership in the alumni associations of both Kansas State University and the University of Kansas, where I was recently honored as a 50-year member. I also serve on the KSU College of Business Character-Based Leadership Board.

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I want to assure you that I will approach my duties as Chairman with the utmost fairness and professionalism, encouraging cooperation and collaboration among all Arts advocates and agencies. I spent 25 years as an Arts Practitioner and Arts Educator, and I know what it means to have an enthusiastic audience of supporters.

My entire life has been based on seeking innovative, positive solutions to seemingly unsolvable problems. I have spent 45 years in a community that I love, where we have worked side-by-side to build something of which we can all be proud—though we did not always agree; however, we have treated one another with love and respect, remaining friends and working partners regardless of our differences. I would expect the same would be true of my leadership with the Kansas Arts Commission. There may be times when we view situations differently; however, you will find that I am willing to listen to you and hope that you will allow me the same courtesy.

The Kansas Arts Commission is here to serve the people of Kansas—all the people of Kansas. Each of the Arts is a language of its own. It exists because people cannot help expressing their emotion through artistic expression. Art makes our world more beautiful. Art makes our world more loving. Art is our soul revealing inexpressible feelings.

I have accepted this appointment to work together with the Kansas Arts Commission in finding innovative solutions that will bring hope and joy to the Arts Communities of Kansas. I am here to help them know that they are valued and appreciated; I am here to let them know that their Art can live on.

I note that the Commission's former Chairman, Henry Schwaller, had called an open meeting of the Commission on June 16 in Lawrence. Because the law requires that official Commission meetings be held in Topeka unless otherwise authorized by the Governor (*see* K.S.A. § 74-5205), the June 16 meeting must be cancelled and rescheduled to sometime in early July. Please note that official Commission business may not lawfully be conducted during any unauthorized meeting. Furthermore, I note that as a matter of law, the Commission will be receiving several new members on July 1, and it makes good sense to include those new members in our discussion.

Please be assured, however, that both Governor Brownback and I clearly understand the need to bring clarity and renewed vision to the Kansas Arts Commission. I have been working closely with the Governor to develop a viable and exciting plan for the future of the Commission—a future in which the Commission will continue to play its vital role in support of the arts in Kansas, but with private philanthropic dollars rather than public resources. I will be communicating with the National Endowment for the Arts about our future and I look forward to presenting the details to all of you at the re-scheduled Commission meeting sometime in the first weeks of July. More details will follow very soon.

I look forward to working with the Kansas Arts Commission in facilitating the overall best interest of Kansas Art and Artists!

"Ad Astra Per Aspera"!

Linda Browning Weis
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